

VZCZCXYZ0000  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTC #0254/01 1100715  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 200715Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
TO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE 0141  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0396  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1054  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2765

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000254

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2019  
TAGS: [OVIP](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [EG](#) [AF](#) [SU](#) [NL](#)  
SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY LEW'S MARCH 31, 2009 CONVERSATION  
WITH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR BASSIM

Classified By: Classified by: Kenneth H. Merten, Deputy Executive Secretary, S/ES, Department of State, reason 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#)1. (U) March 31, 2009; 5:000 p.m.; The Hague, Netherlands.

[1](#)2. (U) Participants:

U.S.  
Deputy Secretary Jacob Lew  
Jim Bever, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, USAID  
Piper Campbell, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary  
Eric Falls (Embassy Notetaker)

Egypt  
Ms. Wafaa Bassim, Ambassador of the Foreign Minister  
Mr. Ashraf Eldib, First Secretary of the Egyptian Embassy

[1](#)3. (C) SUMMARY: On the margins of the March 31 Afghanistan Conference in The Hague, Ambassador Bassim pressed the Deputy Secretary to boost aid to Egypt. The two leaders briefly discussed the situation in Afghanistan, Gaza, and Sudan. END SUMMARY.

-----  
U.S. Aid to Egypt  
-----

[1](#)4. (C) Bassim urged the Deputy Secretary to return aid funding from the \$200 million proposed in the coming year to the level of \$415 million from past years. Egypt believes the prior U.S. administration did not effectively engage Congress to justify its level of funding. The Egyptian embassy in Washington works with Congress but needs help from the Administration to ensure that Congress is aware of the situation on the ground. Assistance is important because the United States and Egypt have so many areas of common concern and cooperation. Bassim urged that U/S Burns visit Cairo soon for ongoing consultations.

[1](#)5. (C) The Deputy Secretary noted that the Secretary had discussed these issues with President Mubarak. The Administration continues to discuss these matters with Congress. He will follow up with U/S Burns, on the Egyptian request to continue their dialogue.

-----  
Afghanistan  
-----

[1](#)6. (U) The Deputy Secretary thanked Bassim for Egypt's participation in the Afghanistan conference, noted that Egypt has special contributions to make, and inquired about ongoing efforts.

[1](#)7. (U) Bassim responded that Egypt has metrics on Afghanistan aid dating back 40 years. Egypt intends to name a special

representative on Afghanistan and would like to join the Afghanistan Contact Group. Egyptian personnel in Afghanistan include 39 teachers and 56 doctors. Egypt provides several scholarships for study in Egypt and supports a small fund to combat narcotrafficking, develop irrigation, support the police, and promote entrepreneurship through microcredit. Egypt is working on a women,s health initiative to teach nurses. Egypt also supports a girls, school with an open schedule, allowing children and young women to attend in a way that does not conflict with their family obligations.

-----  
Gaza  
-----

¶18. (C) The Deputy thanked Bassim for Egypt,s support for the Middle East peace process, for helping to stabilize Gaza, and for helping to stop arms smuggling.

¶19. (C) Bassim said &I can assure you we are committed to prevent weapons smuggling through Egypt,8 but Sinai is a sensitive area, and Egypt will not allow foreign personnel to monitor the border. She urged the Deputy Secretary to send the border inspection equipment promised by the United States, and the Deputy Secretary promised to follow up.

-----  
Sudan  
-----

¶10. (C) The Deputy Secretary stated that Sudanese President Bashir should reverse his order to expel NGOs, and encouraged Egypt to help.

¶11. (C) Bassim said Egypt does not want &instability in our back yard.8 President Mubarak told Bashir the expulsion was ~ a good thing,8 that it &provokes the international community,8 and it &worsens the humanitarian situation.8 Bashir responded that he had only expelled 10 or so of the hundreds of NGOs. He claimed the expelled NGOs were inciting the population against the government. Bashir asked for Arab aid to address the humanitarian concerns.

GALLAGHER  
GALLAGHER